

Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives Plan for Evaluation of Library Services and Technology Act Funds

INTRODUCTION

In 1997 the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives (KDLA) prepared a Long Range Program which contained the Commonwealth's present and projected library needs, as well as a plan for meeting those needs with Federal funds made available under the State-administered Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) program. Utilizing staff and customer surveys to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, problems, trends and threats that can and do have an impact on the organization and the library public, KDLA developed a strategic plan which included strategies and action plans for the future of the Kentucky library community. Many of the objectives of the strategic plan were directly linked to the LSTA and served as a guide by which the state library administrative agency would carry out the purposes of the Act.

A subcommittee of the State Advisory Council on Libraries was appointed to guide the development of the LSTA five year plan. Their decisions, based on surveys of the library community, as well as the experience and advice of professionals from the State Library, and the KDLA Strategic Plan served as the basis on which the LSTA Long Range Plan was created. The plan included an evaluation component for all projects of the five-year period. Specific elements of the evaluation component will be emphasized in the final evaluation report. This letter outlines the plan for evaluation of the Kentucky LSTA 1998-2002 Program.

5-Year Evaluation Report

I. Overall report of results in achieving goals and objectives based on 5-Year Plan.

Evaluation Planning

The KDLA five year plan program evaluation states that, "objectives in the five year plan shall be designed in such a manner that the effectiveness of programs and projects will be *evaluated annually*, the progress or lack of progress toward meeting the objectives can be reported, and a plan for future remedial action can be developed, if necessary. Grant programs and projects will be monitored on a routine basis and will be *evaluated semi-annually* to assure compliance with applicable Federal, State and State Library requirements." The *Annual evaluations* of each project have been compiled into in-depth KDLA annual reports, which will be the chief tools used in completing the five-year evaluation. Details of the annual reports are explained in the evaluation methodology section of this letter.

Evaluation Methodology

As a result of the *Long-Range evaluation plan*, quarterly reports have been submitted by all subgrantees. Monitors for KDLA based statewide projects submit two reports per year. An *annual report / evaluation* for all projects is completed in December of each year. Annual reports include an Objective Summary, Reporting Results – Progress And Problems, and the Outcome and/or Benefits of each program. Subgrantees are required to submit extensive reports on grant activity. Each subgrant final report answers the following questions.

1. List the project objectives. For each, discuss the extent of accomplishment.
2. Identify and explain project objectives not accomplished.
3. Explain how this project has been effective in achieving the goals and objectives of your library, agency and organization.
4. Explain any problems you encountered in the administration of the project.
5. List Target audience.
6. List the geographical area served by the project.
7. What plans have been made to continue this program or service with local or other funds after this grant period?
8. What recommendations would you make to another library, agency or organization considering the same or a similar project?
9. List the greatest overall strengths of the project? Describe major accomplishments and/or significant benefits of the project including the impact that this program had on staff and/or patrons. Include anecdotal information if possible.
10. List the greatest drawbacks or weaknesses of this project.

Three Components will comprise the *final evaluation*.

- I. An Evaluation Team made up of State Library personnel and members of the State Library Advisory Council will review the reports for each year of the LSTA Five-year Plan in order to compile an overall report of the results in achieving goals and objectives of the plan.
- II. In collaboration with the University of Kentucky Research Foundation, an extensive survey was developed and sent to libraries throughout the Commonwealth in 1995 to aid in the development of the five-year plan. This survey will be repeated to determine what, if any, changes have been made in library services within the five year period. Results will be included in the *final evaluation*.
- III. All projects will be reviewed and evaluated according to objectives, needs, inputs, activities, outputs and/or outcomes and indicators. Evaluations may involve site visits, phone interviews, surveys, focus groups and review of reports. Four projects will be extensively evaluated according to the following guidelines.

II. Results Of In-Depth Evaluations

Plan

KDLA established four objectives to address in the five-year plan. The first two objectives were technology related while the last two related to library services. The objectives and a plan for the evaluation of the objectives are listed below.

Technology -Objectives

Objective 1

Support the development, maintenance, and/or linking of bibliographic union databases and access tools; and provide mechanisms for referral of requests and access to information and materials contained within the databases.

Objective 2

Promote and facilitate the expansion of statewide network and other multi-type library cooperative activities including the use of the Kentucky Information Highway, the Internet, World Wide Web, and other resource sharing strategies.

Technology – In-Depth Evaluation

Ten projects were developed by the state library to address the technology needs of the library community in the Commonwealth. All projects will be evaluated according to the ten questions and three components in the methodology listed previously. After completion and careful study of the overall report of project activities, KDLA will choose two of the technology related projects for an in-depth study. Factors to be taken into consideration will include the number of Kentuckians reached through technology services, the extent of technology usage, amount of funding per project, and outcomes for each project. The *evaluation* may involve site visits, phone interviews, surveys, focus groups, and extensive reviews of the annual reports. The Evaluation Team will contact grant recipients to determine long-term benefits or drawbacks of the projects.

Library Services / Targeted Services Objectives

Objective 3

Improve the service provided by the state library to the libraries and citizens of Kentucky to ensure equitable access to information, resources and services.

Objective 4

Strengthen the statewide library system by extending and improving access to and provision for library resources, services and personnel to areas of the state in which library services are inadequate and for children in urban and rural areas, the disadvantage, and the disabled.

Library Services /Targeted Services – In-Depth Evaluation

Approximately 30 projects have been developed to address targeted services needs. Performance measures have been established where possible in each project or program. During the overall study of the LSTA program, the Evaluation Team will review programmatic and fiscal reports to assess indicators that progress is being made toward these measures. All projects will be evaluated according to the ten questions and three components in the methodology listed previously. At least two targeted service projects will be evaluated in depth. *Evaluation* may involve site visits, phone interviews, surveys, focus groups, and extensive review of the annual reports. The Evaluation Team will contact grant recipients to determine long-term benefits or drawbacks of the projects.

III. Lessons Learned

1. Reporting Measurement Results.

- After review of all projects, the Evaluation Team will prepare a final summary of reporting results. The summary will cover the following points.
 - a) Were the objectives met? If not, why not?
 - b) Were the products or services acquired within budget and on-time? If not, why not?
 - c) Did the results differ from what was expected or provide the information intended?
 - d) What actions or changes would improve performance?

2. Translating Results Into Action

- The results of the annual evaluations of programs and projects will be incorporated into subsequent planning tools.

IV. Brief Review of Evaluation Process

1. Who will be involved?

- I. A subcommittee of State Library staff and members of the State Advisory Council on Libraries will comprise the Evaluation Team. The Advisory Council is made up of twenty-one members, representing public, school, college or university, and special libraries; library users with disabilities; and library users including disadvantaged persons. A function of the Council is to provide objective assistance in evaluating library programs, services and activities under the LSTA.
- II. The University of Kentucky Research Foundation will be hired to assist in data collection and evaluation.

2. Methodologies will include;

- I. Annual report review
- II. A follow-up survey of user groups
- III. Site visits, focus groups, and phone interviews

V. Timeline

- April, 1998 – Initial LSTA Evaluation Team was chosen to examine ways of collecting data for the KDLA evaluation procedure in preparation for the 5-year evaluation.
- December, 2000 – Letter outlining evaluation process drafted.
- January, 2001 – Letter submitted to IMLS
- January – April – Initial data collection and analysis (first four years)
- June –September, 2001 – UK Research Survey
- August – September, 2001- Follow up data collection and analysis (last year)
- October, 2001 – March, 2002 - Evaluation process Completed

VI. Estimated Budget

The Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives has allocated up to \$25,000 for the evaluation process.